

Fixed Appliance Instructions

The following information is to explain what to expect when you have your fixed appliance fitted and how to look after the brace to enable it to work effectively. If the instructions given are followed carefully, your treatment will progress swiftly to the best result.

Components of your fixed appliance:

Your fixed appliance consists of small metal (or porcelain) attachments called brackets, fixed to your teeth with a special dental adhesive. The attachments are easily removed at the end of treatment, leaving your teeth unharmed. A wire and elastic components link these attachments and it is these that apply the force to move your teeth.

What to expect following fit of your fixed appliance:

Rubbing: For the first 2-3 days the brackets may rub a little on the lips and cheeks. This is because the lips and cheeks are not used to the brackets being there. After a few days the lips stop bumping into the brackets and any soreness will settle. Over this period you could use the wax supplied to cover any particularly prominent brackets.

Tenderness: All the teeth are on the move now and so there may be some tenderness in the first few days. A softish diet and painkillers if required should be all that is needed. If you have any discomfort that is not settling after 4-5 days or you feel that something has broken please get in touch as soon as possible.

Fixed braces do not usually affect your speech.

Once the appliance has settled, any further discomfort should be minimal but your teeth can feel tender again following your brace adjustments.

Care of your fixed appliance:

The appliances are very sophisticated and whilst they are carefully designed to tolerate being in the mouth, a little extra care is called for to keep them in good working order and prevent breakages. It is your responsibility to prevent breakages, which with care should not occur. It is essential that the appliances are kept thoroughly clean to reduce the risk of damage to the teeth and gums during treatment.

Eating and diet:

It is imperative that you follow the following advice:

Please take time and care with your food, especially while your brace is new and you are still getting used to it.

Cut up your food into smaller pieces.

Do not bite into foods such as crusty rolls, apples and carrots. Cut them up and eat them.

Avoid any type of chewy and sticky foods such as toffee, chewing gum, boiled sweets and tough meats.

Avoid any type of hard and crusty foods such as crusty bread, pizza crust, mints, crunchy breakfast cereals and hard biscuits.

Avoid sugary snacks and drinks between meals and before bedtime.

Avoid fizzy or acidic drinks and large amounts of fruit juice.

Avoid biting your nails or chewing your pen.

Please remember that most patients do not have any breakages during their treatment time. If you have higher than average or consistent breakages, we may be forced to remove your brace early.

Please remember that fewer breakages mean shorter treatment time.

It is recommended that you wear a gumshield for contact sports or sports requiring a protective helmet.

Cleaning your teeth and brace:

Neglecting your brushing and allowing plaque to accumulate around your brace is likely to cause permanent severe damage to your teeth and gums. Braces can be kept clean as long as you take time and are thorough and disciplined over your brushing routine. You should always remember to:

Brush your teeth thoroughly at least twice a day for 3-4 minutes each time.

Use an interdental toothbrush to clean under the wires.

If possible, carry a travel toothbrush with you for use after lunch.

Use a daily alcohol-free fluoride mouthwash at a different time of the day to when you brush your teeth.

Pay particular attention to brush where the gums meet the teeth.

Use disclosing tablets once or twice a week to monitor and improve your brushing.

Please remember we will be forced to stop your treatment if your tooth brushing is consistently poor to avoid damaging your teeth.

Please remember to attend your dental check-ups with your regular dentist throughout your orthodontic treatment so that your teeth can be checked for decay.

Do take the opportunity when cleaning the teeth to check for any damage. If there are any problems it is important that you let us know as soon as possible by phoning the practice. If the problem can be dealt with easily an extra visit may be avoided, however we will make time available to see you if there are

more serious problems. Remember that a broken brace is not working at its best and that it may even be causing unwanted tooth movements that will make your treatment take longer. *So, please keep in touch.*

Finally, we would ask you respectfully to appreciate our efforts to keep the costs of providing our service to you as low as possible. To do this it is essential that you do three things:

- *Follow our advice regarding your fixed brace.*
- *Keep us closely informed of any problem that you may have.*
- *Attend punctually at the time of your appointment.*